

**Please Note: These minutes are pending Board approval.
Board of Education
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting on September 5, 2017 at 7:15 p.m. in the Reed Library, 3 Trades Lane.

K. Alexander, Chair	L. Rodrigue
M. Ku, Vice Chair	J. Davila
D. Leidlein, Secretary (7:38)	R. Bienkowski (absent)
J. Vouros (7:30)	3 Staff
R. Harriman-Stites	10 Public
A. Clure (absent)	2 Press
D. Cruson	

Mr. Alexander called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

MOTION: Mrs. Ku moved that the Board of Education go into executive session to discuss the NoVo Grant positions and invited Dr. Rodrigue, Mrs. Evans Davila and Mr. Bienkowski.

Mr. Cruson seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 1 – Executive Session

The Board came out of executive session at 7:28 p.m.

Item 2 – Pledge of Allegiance

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved that the Board of Education add an item to the agenda to discuss transportation. Mrs. Harriman-Stites seconded.

Mr. Vouros suggested that Dr. Rodrigue be allowed to do her report before the consent agenda and then have public participation so they can hear what she has to say.

Mrs. Ku stated that we were going to give the Superintendent two weeks and was good with keeping it as is.

Motion passes unanimously. This item will be under new business.

Item 3 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mrs. Ku moved that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda which includes the minutes of August 15, 2017, the Newtown High School Marching Band field trip, the donation of two cars for the Newtown High School automotive repair classes, and the resignation of Nicole Penso. Mr. Cruson seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 4 – Public Participation

Lucia Kortz, 7 Rooster Ridge, said her children at Reed are late every day and miss morning announcements. The current bell schedule is 9:05 to 3:37. All-Star shows them on the buses at 3:37. Students are being dismissed at 3:26. There are 11 minutes being removed from the school day in addition to the 12 for the school start time change which is 70 hours from the school year. She is concerned about how this will affect the students and how the shuttling will work on inclement weather days. Bus drivers are driving in excess of 40 mph. She doesn't see how these times will improve.

Amanda Lucas, 33 Elm Drive, has a son in kindergarten who rides for 35 minutes. She asked to change the bus but they could not do so. Their stop was missed and another parent saw her son at the stop a few houses down the road, took him off and called her. She questioned how the driver allowed a stranger to board the bus and remove a child that wasn't theirs. This was not acceptable.

Item 5 – Reports

Chair Report: Mr. Alexander spoke about the CABA Conference this fall.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Rodrigue thanked the high school student representatives for joining the Board. She visited all schools last week and was impressed how students were acclimated by day 2. This new system necessitated a unique orchestration between Reed and the elementary schools. Also, one of the non-negotiables from the committee is that there would be no loss of instructional time. Finally, we knew we would need more time than usual for dismissal. Many responses from parents showed improvement after three days. Buses have been monitored as well as traffic and departure times were reduced in the first five days. On average, the elementary buses left by 3:55 p.m. The average ride time is 32 to 43 minutes. Two buses are at 57 minutes which is unacceptable to us. This morning there was an accident which caused buses to be late at secondary schools and Reed. St. Rose has eight buses with an average ride time between 20 and 35 minutes. There are 10 to 29 students on a bus. We will look at some of the lighter rides for St. Rose to see if we can use some of their buses as we have two with some overcrowding. We also added another bus to split a route and asked for this week to resolve issues.

Dr. Rodrigue shared current enrollment information. Currently we have 4,313 students which is a 2.2% growth over our projections. Class sizes are within the guidelines.

Mrs. Ku asked the kindergarten enrollment to which Dr. Rodrigue responded that we had 241 students.

There were no committee reports.

Student Reports:

Rory Edwards: The Link Crew participated in freshman orientation. We had a modified schedule for the first three days.

Talia Hankin spoke about the new administrators in place – Mr. Roach as interim principal and Mr. Blank as interim assistant principal. With the later school start time advisory will only be held on Monday.

Rory: We began our normal schedule on Wednesday with freshman continuing to be introduced to the school. Many college essays have been written by seniors and submitted.

Talia: Clubs began informational sessions to recruit members and the auditorium is expected to be ready in November.

Rory: Sports teams are ready to start with football and soccer games this Friday.

Item 6 – Old BusinessHigh School Auditorium Update:

Dr. Rodrigue met with Michelle Hiscavich, Gino Faiella and the construction team for phase two of the project and we will hopefully be there in late November.

Ms. Hiscavich provided photos of the auditorium as it nears completion.

Mr. Vouros asked who would be in charge of the rental so everyone knows what is required for its use.

Ms. Hiscavich said we would be going into specific detail as we want to preserve this work. For larger events where more equipment is needed we will need more than one student involved.

Dr. Rodrigue thanked Ms. Hiscavich who has been in the forefront of this project.

CIP:

MOTION: Mrs. Ku moved that the Board of Education approve the CIP as presented.
Mr. Cruson seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Superintendent Search:

MOTION: Mrs. Ku moved that the Board of Education Move that the Board of Education establish a Personnel Search Committee for the purpose of recommending to the Board one or more candidates for the position of Superintendent of Schools, and moved further, that the Personnel Search Committee be comprised of the following individuals in their capacity as members of the Board: Keith Alexander, Michelle Ku, Debbie Leidlein, John Vouros, Rebekah Harriman-Stites, Andy Clure and Dan Cruson. Mrs. Leidlein seconded.

Mr. Alexander said this allows us to meet more often as a committee and move it along at every board meeting. The chair of the committee can bring things to the Board and he recommended Mrs. Harriman-Stites be the chair.
Motion passes unanimously.

Discussion on Transportation:

Mrs. Harriman-Stites said this is a complicated situation and appreciated Mr. Moretti's and the other elementary principal's notifications to the parents. Reed parents would benefit from similar communications. She wants to be sure we can make a change if needed and doesn't want bus drivers under pressure and have to rush. We should consider that we may have to make an adjustment to the timing. We don't have to make it work if it doesn't. She appreciated Dr. Rodrigue and the parents keeping us in the loop.

Mr. Alexander thanked Mr. Cruson for responding to many emails.

Mr. Cruson said his focus was around Head O'Meadow School but shares the concerns at Reed. There has been improvement at Head O'Meadow and today's dismissal was running smooth and organized. There was a concern of students having water on buses but they are allowing that only. He noted we weren't made aware that propane buses need a start-up time. There is a delay of 20 to 60 seconds before they can start the engine. There's a bottle neck at Head O'Meadow and one of those buses is at the head of their line.

Mrs. Ku appreciated the update on St. Rose. We need to keep in mind that we were spending more than double for their transportation.

Mr. Vouros asked Dr. Rodrigue to explain the 10 minutes for dismissal that has been occurring. He noted that one St. Rose bus had 10 students and asked if they can go on a minivan so we can use the larger bus.

Dr. Rodrigue said that in any given year we usually dismiss early the first few days. We wanted to do that all five days which is why Reed dismissed at 3:37 today. The last students were dropped off at 4:44 today. We did have had some students on the wrong buses.

Mr. Cruson said Head O'Meadow is trying to keep students in school longer. His son was on the bus for 10 minutes before the bus drove out. They didn't let out until the Reed buses were on the way.

Mr. Vouros asked if it was possible to have principals communicate with the parents on a daily basis so they are aware of what is happening each day and Dr. Rodrigue can forward it to the Board.

Dr. Rodrigue said she had asked that of each principal.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites said it would go a long way with parents if there was better communication from Reed. We should also look into the GPS app for parents that can't track their children. She was glad we were looking at student time with teachers in the morning because she doesn't want a contractual burden on teachers.

Mrs. Ku asked about having a traffic officer at Reed.

Dr. Rodrigue said there was one there in the afternoon the first week at Reed and Middle Gate School. They should also be there this week.

Mrs. Ku said communication from the principals would be great. The number of students per seat should also be addressed.

Dr. Rodrigue said we are pulling that data from the drivers and also looking at videos. A lot of seating issues cleared up by days three and four. We are monitoring two buses that have three in a seat. Some students are choosing to have three and some are choosing to sit alone.

Mrs. Ku suggested the GPS app go through the security committee first.

Mr. Vouros asked if principals have worked to emphasize bus etiquette to the children.

Dr. Rodrigue said they have and that Reed has spent a lot of time talking about this. She publicly thanked all of her leadership team along with their entire staff.

Item 7 – New Business

Newtown Center for Support and Wellness:

Dr. Rodrigue introduced Jennifer Crane, Director of the Newtown Center for Support and Wellness.

Ms. Crane was meeting with various groups and gave a presentation on their services. Brian Mauriello joined her.

Summer Writing Curriculum:

Mrs. Evans Davila spoke about the summer curriculum projects.

Nurses Contract:

MOTION: Mrs. Ku moved Move that the Board of Education approve the ratified Newtown School Nurses contract for the period July 1, 2017 through June 20, 2021. Mrs. Harriman-Stites seconded. Vote: 5 ayes, 1 abstained (Mrs. Leidlein)

Mrs. Leidlein abstained because she was not there for the contract discussion.

Item 8 – Public Participation

Lucia Kortze, 7 Rooster Ridge, said that two clusters at Reed eat lunch at 1:48 p.m. and asked if that time could be adjusted. Her son is on the bus at 8:18 and doesn't eat until that time.

Nancy White, 14 Butternut Ridge, said that regarding the shuttle she thought there was supposed to be minimal change. Buses are still at Hawley close to 4:00 p.m. She asked if they could be in the classroom doing something instead of being in the hallway or on a bus. Her son gets home late and is on the bus early. How can it be cost neutral going from three tiers to two

tiers? Reed lunch used to start at 12:30. Lunch should have stayed static and should be looked into to see if it can be reworked.

Kristin Alesevich, 16 Fieldstone Drive, said her second grader has 20 minutes of busy work in the morning. This is difficult for teachers. Assess cutting off 10 minutes at end of the Reed day.

Katie Burke, 48 Taunton Hill Road, wants to know what time the last bus arrives at Reed. She is concerned about losing instructional time. Will the students have extra days at the end of the year to make up this time? She thought the Reed traffic person was going to be there every day. She asked if another committee could improve the process. We need more buses. She appreciated Dr. Rodrigue's hard work.

Amy Twitchell, 4 Rooster Ridge Road, has three children. Her high school student is more rested but this change has negatively affected the K-6 students. Fifth graders arriving late every day are missing announcements. Her son has to rush to get to the bus and is upset this year. She is offended by some comments on social media and hopes we aren't stuck in a situation if it isn't working. Everyone should benefit. It is unacceptable for K-4 students to sit on a bus for 10 to 20 minutes before Reed students arrive. She thanked Dr. Rodrigue.

MOTION: Mrs. Ku moved that the meeting adjourn. Mrs. Leidlein seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 9 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Debbie Leidlein
Secretary



Air-Star Transportation

31 Pecks Lane
Newtown, CT 06470
(203) 304 - 9778
Fax: (203) 304 - 9776

Principal Approval: _____

BUSES ALREADY BOOKED

CHARTER BUS REQUEST

Person requesting: Eckhardt School: NHS

Class: Marching Band Date of trip: Oct 6, 7, 8

Pickup time: 12 (AM) / PM Destination: Philadelphia, PA

Address of destination: Embassy Suites 9000 Bartram Avenue
Philadelphia PA 19153

Leave time from destination: _____ AM / PM Snow/Rain date: _____

Teacher in charge of trip: Eckhardt / Carley

No. students: 96 No. staff: 17 No. parents (if applicable): TBD

Do any students have special needs for transportation? Yes / (No)

If **yes**, what is required? (wheel chair, harness, etc): _____

If multiple students have special needs requirements, please list: _____

Party responsible for payment: Kurt Eckhardt NHS Marching Band

Contact person: _____ Phone No.: 203-733-6017

If additional space required for listing, please include separate page

- A minimum of **two weeks** is needed to place a reservation. Please understand that availability of a date decreases the later you wait.
- Average capacity is 50 students per bus. Capacity decreases for older students and adult-sized passengers.
- Students with special needs requirements (wheel chair, harness) will require a Type II bus as full-size buses cannot accommodate.
- If trip is being paid through a grant, school is still **responsible for payment for service**.
- Please fax this request with all completed information. A confirmation will be faxed back to you with all costs.
- We reserve the right to have buses back in town for school dismissal schedule.
- Cancellation or postponement of a reserved trip requires a minimum of two hours' notice on a school day; one day prior if a weekend trip. Failure to notify may incur a cost for time bus ran.

August 23, 2017

TO: Dr. Lorrie Rodrigue

FROM: Dave Roach

Please accept the donation of a 2002 Jaguar, VIN: SAJEA51C52WC38259
Model: X-Type 3.0 Liter , 4DR SEDAN, BLACK at an estimated value of \$4,200
from Robert Zimmermann, 262A Agawam Drive Stratford, CT 06614

The vehicle will be used by Newtown High School Automotive Repair Classes.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Roach", is positioned below the text "Thank you." The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

August 29, 2017

TO: Dr. Lorrie Rodrigue

FROM: Dave Roach

Please accept the donation of a 1998 Subaru Impreza 2.5 RS, VIN:
JF1GM6756WG402893 at an estimated value of \$3,900 from Paul Mitchell, 15A
Old Green Road, Sandy Hook, CT 0682

The vehicle will be used by Newtown High School Automotive Repair Classes.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Roach", is positioned below the text "Thank you.".



Deramo, Suzanne <deramos@newtown.k12.ct.us>

Resignation

Penso, Nicole <penson@newtown.k12.ct.us>

Sat, Aug 12, 2017 at 9:51 PM

To: "Raquel, Sonia" <raquels@newtown.k12.ct.us>, Deborah Mailloux-Petersen <petersend@newtown.k12.ct.us>

Cc: "Deramo, Suzanne" <deramos@newtown.k12.ct.us>, Lorrie Rodrigue <rodriguel@newtown.k12.ct.us>, Barbara Gasparine <gasparineb@newtown.k12.ct.us>

Dear Ms. Raquel and Mrs. Peterson,

Please accept this letter as my formal resignation as School Psychologist for the Newtown Public School District. Unfortunately, family circumstances have changed and I will no longer be able to continue my position.

I cannot express enough positive things about working at Head O' Meadow Elementary School. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with both staff and students and will miss both. Please let me know if there is any way I can help ease this transition.

Sincerely,

Nicole Penso

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Nicole Penso, M.A., Ed.M., NCSP
School Psychologist
Head O' Meadow Elementary School
(203) 270-6178

Report to the Board of Education: Status of Summer Curriculum Projects

Submitted by

Assistant Superintendent Jean M. Evans Davila

September 5, 2017

Summary of Selected Highlights:

- The partnership established in 2016-17 with concept-based curriculum expert Lois Lanning has led to plans to spotlight our units of study in English Language Arts (ELA) grades 4, 6, 8, and 9-12 in her newest book.
- Approximately 220 summer work hours were dedicated to vertical planning for Next Generation Science Standards-aligned professional development, identification of unit topics, and inquiry-based science learning.
- The K-12 Health curriculum was aligned fully with our concept-based model and now includes standardized presentations for sensitive topics (i.e., Human Growth and Development, HIV/AIDS, and Contraception).
- Grades 3 and 4 teachers continued ELA work begun this year in developing conceptually designed curriculum based on the most recently published editions of *Teachers College Units of Study in Reading and Writing*.
- Grades 1 and 2 continued and completed work on Math units of study aligned with our concept-based curriculum model and based on the most recently released 2.0 edition of *Stepping Stones*.
- Teachers of the gifted were allocated extra work hours for curriculum development that will benefit students across all grades the program currently serves.
- The curriculum for Project Adventure in grade 9 is developed and ready to begin the approval process.
- 1,365 summer work hours were allocated to k-12 curriculum projects impacting learning in all disciplines.
- K-8 teachers were provided with 1,250 summer work hours dedicated to professional development in K-8 writing strategies and facilitated by nationally renowned authors and experts in the workshop model.

Status of Projects:

Elementary Schools			
Projects	Completed	Ongoing	Notes
Art - Grade 4		X	Scheduled for completion during school year.
ELA/Reading – Grades 3 & 4		X	Scheduled for completion by Summer 2018.
ELA/Writing - Grades 3 & 4		X	Scheduled for completion by Summer 2018.
Health- Grades K – 4	X		Ready to begin approval process.
Math - Grades K & 1	X		Ready to begin approval process.
Music - Grades K – 4		X	Scheduled to continue throughout school year.
Project Challenge – Grades 3 & 4		X	Scheduled for completion in Summer 2018.
Science/NGSS – Grades K - 4		X	2017-18 PD Plan, unit topics, & inquiry.

Reed Intermediate School			
Projects	Completed	Ongoing	Notes
ELA/Word Study - Grades 5 & 6	X		Identification of Tier 2 vocabulary and definitions.
Health - Grades 5 & 6	X		Ready to begin approval process.
Math 5 and 5+ - Grade 5		X	Scheduled for completion in Summer 2018.
Project Challenge – Grades 5 & 6		X	Scheduled for completion in Summer 2018.
Science/NGSS – Grades 5 & 6		X	2017-18 PD Plan and identified unit topics.

Newtown Middle School			
Projects	Completed	Ongoing	Notes
ELA - Grade 7	X		Added D/I strategies and resources.
ELA - Grade 8		X	Scheduled for completion in Summer 2018.
Health - Grades 7 & 8	X		Ready to begin approval process.
Project Challenge – Grades 7 & 8		X	Scheduled for completion in Summer 2018.
Science/NGSS – Grades 7 & 8		X	2017-18 PD plan and identified of unit topics.

Newtown High School

Department	Projects	Completed	Ongoing	Notes
Alternative Ed	TAP		X	Brochure w/ handbook done; curriculum ongoing.
BEAT	Video Game Design II	X		Ready to begin approval process w/ minor edits.
Capstone	Senior Experience21	X		Ready to begin approval process.
English	English I/Grade 9		X	Scheduled for completion by Summer 2018.
	English II/Grade 10	X		Ready to begin approval process.
Health	Grades 9 & 11	X		Ready to begin approval process.
P/E	Project Adventure	X		Ready to begin approval process.
Science	CPB Chemistry		X	Scheduled for completion by January 2018
	IPES		X	Scheduled for completion by Summer 2018.
Social Studies	Amer. Gov't & Politics		X	Scheduled for completion during school year.
	AP Human Geography	X		Ready to begin approval process.
	Sociology	X		Ready to begin approval process.
Visual & Performing Arts	Acting II	X		Ready to begin approval process.
	Theater Design	X		Ready to begin approval process.
World Lang	Spanish 1A	X		Ready to begin approval process.

NEWTOWN BOARD OF EDUCATION
SUMMARY - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
2018/19 TO 2022/23

For Discussion for
BOE 9/5/2017

Year 1 Year 2 Year 3 Year 4 Year 5

CIP Item #	Location	Description of Project	underway 2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	TOTALS
underway	Hawley Elem.	Roof replacement 1948 and 1997 sections	\$850,000						
2	Hawley Elem.	Replace boiler, steam to HW, 1921 section & Lighting energy project			\$1,814,720				
4	Hawley Elem.	Ventilation and HVAC Renovations, partial A/C			\$4,719,120				\$6,533,840
1	Middle Gate Elem	Roof replacement 1964 and 1992 sections		\$1,685,400					\$1,685,400
7	Reed Intermediate	Install high efficiency gas boilers & LED lighting conversion					\$2,000,000		\$2,000,000
underway	Middle School	Phase I - New boilers, re-piping ('52) - Energy project	\$1,800,000						
6	Middle School	II - Ventilation, HVAC, AC Auditorium & Café, replace rooftop units '98					\$3,093,300		\$3,093,300
underway	High School	Phase II Auditorium project	\$750,000						
5	High School	Replace/restore stadium turf field (11th year)					\$1,060,000		
3	High School	Main boiler replacements - High Efficiency Gas			\$954,000				\$2,014,000
TOTAL COSTS OF ALL PROJECTS			\$3,400,000	\$1,685,400	\$2,768,720	\$4,719,120	\$4,153,300	\$2,000,000	\$15,326,540
TOTAL TO BE BONDED				\$1,685,400	\$2,768,720	\$4,719,120	\$4,153,300	\$2,000,000	\$15,326,540
School Building Grant Eligible			2017-18 Reimbursement rate 36.43%	\$613,991	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$613,991

Eligibility for project inclusion on the CIP is that the cost must exceed 0.25% of the Total Town Budget, \$113,395,532. For 2017-18 the threshold is \$283,489. Estimates on file are increased by 6% from last year